



MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, March 25, 2003, City Council Chambers

Minutes approved by CD Commission on 4-22-2003

Call to Order: Chairperson Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Roll Call: Connie Eldridge called the roll. A quorum was present.

Commission Members Present: Fred Cobb, Chris Diana, Alice Englebretsen, Robert Lewis, Joanna Shisler, Anne Heinze Silvis, Umesh Thakkar, Dennis Vidoni

Commission Members Absent: None

Others Present: Bob Grewe, Connie Eldridge, Mike Loschen, and Karen Rasmussen, Community Development Services; Lisa Busjahn, Family Service; Bob Leach and Jerry G. Moreland, United Citizens and Neighbors (UCAN), Robin Barrow, YWCA; Esther Patt, Urbana City Council; Mindy Long, Developmental Services Center; Darlene Kloeppel, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; Tricia Miller, Jonathan Mayothe.

Approval of Minutes: *Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or corrections to the February 25, 2003 minutes. Commissioner Vidoni moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Thakkar seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Petitions and Communications: Bob Leach, United Citizens and Neighbors (UCAN), encouraged commissioners to fund UCAN's house rehabilitation project. Their grant request for \$33,500 would be added to \$64,000, which came from the sale of UCAN's first house plus unspent funds from a City grant. Because most families want a three-bedroom home, UCAN is planning to purchase and rehabilitate a three-bedroom, rather than a two-bedroom home. Mr. Leach noted this would add to the project cost. Another factor is that lead abatement cannot be done by volunteers and must be done by licensed specialists.

Concerning Neighborhood Organization Grant (NOG) funds, Mr. Leach requested the CD Commission waive the three-year funding limit. This money is helpful for capacity building and mailings. Although UCAN has raised membership dues this year, he noted it is hard to survive on dues alone and the City funds are very helpful.

Chairperson Cobb asked what would happen if UCAN did not receive the requested funds. Mr. Leach replied that UCAN would continue; however, they might not be able to rehabilitate another house. The first project took a lot of volunteer labor. Commissioner Englebretsen inquired about the project's success. Mr. Leach responded that the house had been empty for one to two years and now it is occupied. One problem they faced was an old garage, which had to be demolished. The cost to bring the garage up to code was prohibitive. Another disappointment was not being able to make the house visitable due to a lack of funds.

Jerry Moreland, a UCAN board representative, stated UCAN wants to expand its capacity to serve the community. The NOG funds will aid in research of organized neighborhoods and surveying neighborhood needs. UCAN has helped families in need of housing.

Staff Report: Mr. Grewe distributed a brief outline. Ms. Rasmussen summarized the application for the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Collaborative Initiative to Help End Chronic Homelessness for Permanent Housing and Assertive Community Treatment (PHACT). Assertive Community Treatment is a program currently in place that provides extensive supportive services to persons with mental health and substance abuse issues. The grant request is over \$1,000,000 and involves the development of the ACT team, rental assistance, medical assistance through Frances Nelson Health Center, and a staff position at the Veterans Administration in Danville. The application is due in Washington, D.C. by April 14. This effort, which is targeted to veterans, would house 17 individuals who are chronically homeless and disabled. She anticipated that over five years 30 persons could be served. Chairperson Cobb asked about competition. Ms. Rasmussen answered this is a competitive process. Applications are ranked by points scored, and geographical distribution will be considered. The City of Decatur, which is linked with the same Veteran's Administration Office and Frances Nelson Health Center, is also submitting an application for Macon County. She understood that the only downstate communities applying are Urbana and Decatur. Chicago and Cook County will also submit an application. There will be only 20 projects nationwide.

Commissioner Vidoni asked if this application will be interfaced with the CD Commission. Ms. Rasmussen replied no; staff will inform the CD Commission if the funds are granted. Mr. Grewe added that NOFAs arrive with a very short timeframe in which to respond.

Continuing with staff report, Mr. Grewe said the Urbana School District 116 will return 914 West Eads parcel to the City of Urbana. Their Housing Construction program is being discontinued.

City Council approved conveyance of 1107 and 1109 North Gregory to Peter Pan Daycare with performance assurances and a reversion clause.

When the City of Urbana pays for the Area 3 Streetlight Project, City will meet HUD's timeliness test for CDBG funding.

The HOME Consortium is waiting for detailed instructions from the Department of Housing and Urbana Development (HUD) concerning the renewal process. In response to Commissioner Lewis, Mr. Loschen said at one time the Village of Rantoul was a member of the HOME Consortium. However, every entity must have the same HOME program fiscal year, which currently is July 1 – June 30. Rantoul does not have the same fiscal year and was not willing to change for the HOME program.

Old Business: **Draft FY 2003-2004 Annual Action Plan** – Mr. Grewe noted the draft Annual Action Plan Version 1.5 included HUD's changes to the funding allocation. He reviewed the changes. HOME received additional funding while Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) took a small reduction. Because there were additional HOME funds, the

CHDO 15 percent Set-Aside funding increased by \$10,698. This was added to Homestead Corporation's Rental Housing Development line item since Urban League is not able to use the additional funds due to caps.

Chairperson Cobb asked about the increased funding in administration and if the funds would be spent. Mr. Grewe explained the HOME regulations allow the City of Urbana to take 10 percent of the new total HOME funds, and they would be spent. Chairperson Cobb questioned the increase in dues and subscriptions. Mr. Grewe responded this increase would help get resources for the HOME Consortium that were not acquired in the past. Also there is some latitude to move within administrative expenses. Chairperson Cobb asked if the extra funds could be used outside of administration. Mr. Grewe replied that 10% is for administration of the HOME Consortium. Commissioner Lewis asked about carryover. Because there is an annual 10% cap on administration funds, Mr. Grewe noted these funds cannot be carried over like project funds. Mr. Grewe described the differences between CDBG and HOME administration funds. Commissioner Lewis asked if it could roll over. Mr. Grewe answered that, after further consideration, HOME funds could remain tagged as administration and be rolled over into next year.

Mr. Grewe said the CHDO 5% set-aside was increased by \$3,565. This was pro-rated between the existing two CHDOs, Homestead Corporation and Urban League.

The City of Champaign provided adjustments to their HOME budget, and Champaign County's allocation also increased. The City of Urbana placed its allocated increase in the New Housing Construction line item. Chairperson Cobb asked if all budget activities were increased. Mr. Grewe said only the HOME portion of the budget was increased. The increases were consistent with federal administration.

Chairperson Silvis moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Draft City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium Annual Action Plan FY 2003-2004. Commissioner Thakkar seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Vidoni remarked it seemed difficult at this stage to change this document. Mr. Grewe replied the budget has been reviewed quite a bit. It is a fluid document that can be changed now or amended later.

Mr. Grewe reminded commissioners that later in this meeting they would be discussing priorities for the Public Service portion of the CDBG funds. He mentioned continuing discussions about Lakeside Terrace Redevelopment and how it relates to the City of Urbana's entitlement programs. Referencing 15% set-aside for project funds for Homestead Corporation, Mr. Grewe mentioned the possibility that Homestead's units in the City of Urbana could serve as replacement units for Lakeside Terrace. Staff is exploring this idea with Homestead. In response to Chairperson Lewis, Mr. Grewe said staff would inform City Council. The properties would be houses that Homestead is purchasing for rental assistance. Jim Rose, Executive Director of Homestead, has indicated they already rent to Section 8 families. Mr. Grewe said there is much to be decided concerning location, applications, and tenant selection. This would be contingent upon the City of Urbana accepting a redevelopment plan. Commissioner Lewis

felt this proposal was about scattered housing and should be as flexible as possible. Mr. Grewe added this could be an option for replacement housing as Lakeside Terrace is phased out.

Commissioner Diana noted on page 19 under Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation the word “including” should be removed. Mr. Loschen agreed and noted that five, not four, houses would be rehabilitated.

The vote was unanimous on the approval of the Draft City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium Annual Action Plan FY 2003-2004.

Homebuyer Assistance Program – Series 2003 – Mr. Grewe briefly reviewed the acceleration of the *AssistUrbana* Program and City Council’s earlier decision to participate in this program. Stern Brothers & Company offers *AssistUrbana*. Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) offers *First-Time Homebuyer Program (MRB)*, *Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program*, and *Home Equity Loan Program (HELP)*. Mr. Grewe stated the City of Urbana has \$2.7 million available in private activity revenue bonds. The City has used these funds in the past for homebuyer assistance programs.

Mr. Grewe noted that *AssistUrbana* has been offered since 1995 and is very popular with families. The mortgage interest rate is higher than the market and does not adjust during the year. Mr. Grewe commented there has been very little activity for the *First-Time Homebuyer Program*. Families wanting a federal tax credit would choose the *Mortgage Credit Certificate Program*. IHDA’s *HELP* is similar to the *AssistUrbana* program; however, IHDA adjusts its interest rates to reflect the current market. *HELP* does not accept VA lending but will accept FHA. Staff recommends providing half the funds to *AssistUrbana* and half to the IHDA *HELP* program. Mr. Grewe noted that *AssistUrbana* is very successful, and the lending institutions use this program. *HELP*’s flexible interest rates are helpful.

Chairperson Cobb asked what the consumers preferred. In reviewing past performance, Mr. Grewe said the *First-Time Homebuyer Below Market Rate Program* did not generate any interest. Mr. Grewe has not talked with first-time homebuyers; however, he has attended monthly meetings with the lenders and asked for feedback. Although staff has encouraged the lenders to use IHDA programs, the lenders have indicated that *AssistUrbana* helps borrowers who have more difficulty getting a conventional loan. The underwriting is not as onerous. However, if an applicant can meet the underwriting requirements, they can benefit from IHDA’s lower interest rate.

In response to Chairperson Cobb, Mr. Grewe said the banks process the applications. City staff distributed pamphlets on the different programs. Commissioner Silvis inquired about the target area. Mr. Grewe responded the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provides a geographic description of the area based on income. The map is created from this description.

Chairperson Cobb asked if *AssistUrbana* interest rates could be lowered. Mr. Grewe replied the interest rate is fixed until all funds in the year that Stern Brothers & Company sold the bonds are utilized. There are still *AssistUrbana* funds in the state-wide pool. Mr. Loschen explained that Stern Brothers & Company is finishing the 2001 bond allocation and will be starting the 2002

allocation. Bonds are sold once a year, and the interest rate is determined at that time. The competitive market rate has slowed usage of the first time homebuyer programs. Chairperson Cobb asked when a buyer could refinance this mortgage. Mr. Loschen replied five years.

Commissioner Thakkar inquired about first-time homebuyer programs in other cities. Mr. Grewe described information on IHDA's website about some larger Illinois communities. There was a limited amount of funding to IHDA's *MCC* Program, with more funds in the *MRB* and *HELP* programs. Mr. Loschen added that because more families need downpayment assistance, *HELP* is a more popular program.

Commissioner Vidoni questioned the recommendation to provide 50% of the funds to *AssistUrbana* even though its mortgage rate was 7%. Mr. Grewe replied this year's interest rate would be determined when Stern Brothers sells the bonds. He hoped the rate would be closer to the existing market interest rate. Commissioner Vidoni asked about the older pool of funds not yet used. Mr. Loschen explained while Stern Brothers will sell the new bonds, the first-time homebuyer program will not offer those funds until 2002 funds are used up. The City of Urbana usually has 30-40 of these loans per year and has not had a problem using *AssistUrbana* funds in the past. After one year, a state-wide pool of funds is created from the remaining monies from participating cities. The City of Urbana could draw monies from this pool as needed.

Commissioner Lewis asked if there were problems due to the lower interest rates. Mr. Loschen agreed that participation will likely be slower until the interest rate is closer to the current market rate. He commented that most families using *AssistUrbana* need downpayment assistance and are willing to take a higher interest rate. Commissioner Lewis felt it was not worthwhile to offer *AssistUrbana* at 7%. In response to Commissioner Vidoni, Mr. Grewe described the banks' familiarity with the *AssistUrbana* Program and their lack of enthusiasm about IHDA's programs. Staff is weighing the best product for potential versus lender participation. Interested in helping those who need downpayment assistance, Commissioner Lewis then suggested providing the funds as follows: 75% to *AssistUrbana* and 25% to IHDA programs. Chairperson Cobb noted there was still a pool of funds in *AssistUrbana*. Commissioner Lewis felt economic recovery in 2004 would help the program. Mr. Grewe mentioned encouraging bank participation in IHDA programs.

Commissioner Diana asked if the *HELP* program involved more requirements. Mr. Grewe explained that IHDA could not share the details of their underwriting; however, IHDA had agreed their requirements are more stringent. Noting the IHDA programs will not allow VA loans, Commissioner Diana asked about the affect on the number of potential home purchases. Mr. Loschen did not know the number of VA loans. Mr. Grewe remarked the lenders feel all programs (VA, FHA) are important to allow for maximum flexibility.

Commissioner Silvis inquired about the rationale for 50/50. Mr. Grewe supported funding a viable program like *AssistUrbana* at a reasonable level. The City of Urbana has not offered IHDA's *HELP* program for several years. Staff did not want to fund a program and have the funds not move. Staff is trying to anticipate the interest rates, the economy and consider to what extent are potential homebuyers excluded. In response to Chairperson Cobb, Mr. Loschen said in the past the *HELP* program received 25% of the bond allocation and did not perform as well

as *AssistUrbana* or the *Below Market Rate* program. Chairperson Cobb asked about remaining funds. Mr. Loschen responded that at the end of the first year there were funds left in the *HELP* program; however, now there are none. There are funds left in the *AssistUrbana* pool.

Mr. Grewe commented that staff liked IHDA's *HELP* program because it better mirrors the market's interest rate. He suggested starting smaller and increasing funds if more homebuyers use IHDA programs. Commissioner Vidoni asked about supporting the *Below Market Rate* program. Mr. Grewe noted this did not get much activity. If the interest rates accelerated, this would be a better program. Commissioner Vidoni asked if the lack of interest reflected program marketing or another reason. Mr. Grewe understood the biggest problem for potential homebuyers was getting a downpayment.

Commissioner Diana asked about any statutory prohibitions for reallocating funds during the year. Mr. Grewe stated the City of Urbana must allocate bond cap funds by May 1. Once the funds are allocated they cannot be changed. In response to Commissioner Diana, Mr. Loschen did not know if IHDA would allow flexibility to shift funds between their programs. Chairperson Cobb felt *AssistUrbana* provided more flexibility. Mr. Grewe added that the City of Champaign was reserving their bond cap funds for a multi-family project on affordable housing. They plan on drawing from the *Assist* Program backlog of funds for first-time homebuyer assistance. The City of Champaign is not ceding any cap to Stern Brothers. Commissioner Vidoni supported providing more funds to IHDA's *HELP* program.

Commissioner Lewis moved to recommend to City Council the City of Urbana allocate its bond cap as follows: 75 percent to the IHDA HELP Program, and 25 percent to AssistUrbana. Commissioner Diana seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Working Draft - Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing – Mr. Grewe reviewed the changes to this second version of the Analysis of Impediments. Staff included a summary statement and a description of all acronyms. Employment data was added to the Executive Summary section methodology.

Commissioner Shisler asked about holding program vouchers. Commissioner Lewis noted that Section 8 vouchers involve a lengthy process. Commissioner Diana asked about the phrase “holds on vouchers.” Commissioner Vidoni suggested being descriptive rather than using vernacular phrases. On page 6 under Summary of Findings, Commissioner Diana suggested expanding the phrase “lack of knowledge.”

Mr. Grewe reviewed corrections, clarifications and reformatting of page 10 to set off comments or trends. Commissioner Lewis asked about overlays. Mr. Grewe replied that was very time consuming; however, staff may be able to consider this at a later date.

Commissioner Diana noted the pie chart on page 9 had extra percentage symbols.

Mr. Grewe mentioned the additional labor/work force data and unemployment rates on page 13. On page 14 he noted that the data projections for percent of income for housing will need to be reviewed and clarified. Concerning the ability to pay for housing, staff took the 2000 census and

looked at wages in Champaign County to see which occupations fell below the living wage. On page 15 Commissioner Diana suggested listing the employers by order of size. Noting there are new technology-based companies, Commissioner Thakkar suggested adding new employers to show the City of Urbana's growth. Commissioner Silvis noted that while individual smaller employers would not be included, they could be grouped together as new employers. Mr. Grewe believed the Chamber of Commerce would have this data.

Mr. Grewe stated the Urbana School District's map on page 60 would need to be recreated on the City of Urbana's base map. This will be done as time permits.

In response to Commissioner Shisler, Mr. Grewe noted the state average for overall performance on state tests was 60.1. Discussion continued about the number of children performing at or above grade level, types of testing, and the range of the scale. Commissioner Lewis commented that the school district has changed testing methodology because of state requirements. Commissioner Silvis clarified that the table indicated the number of children meeting or exceeding the Illinois Learning Standards for that school, district and state.

Mr. Grewe suggested changes to the HMDA data table on page 16 and adding page numbers for related appendices. He discussed the Mass Transit District's federal requirement for bus service and noted all Urbana citizens are within one quarter of a mile of a bus route. Concerning housing profiles, Mr. Grewe mentioned that nontraditional family households are closer to the University of Illinois. Planning students from the University of Illinois are currently studying the supply of affordable housing in the area.

Commissioner Vidoni noted the outline did not correspond to the text and suggested adding a numbered outline to the table of contents. Commissioner Diana agreed the numbering was confusing.

Mr. Grewe stated that Esther Patt from the Champaign Urbana Tenant Union provided good feedback and clarified the complaint process. There has not been time to more deeply probe the nature of complaints, as requested earlier by Commissioner Thakkar.

On page 23 Commissioner Silvis suggested rewording the following two sentences: "According to Esther Patt, landlords do not know that you are discriminating against a person if you treat them differently than anyone else. They think discrimination is just outright refusal to rent to a person."

Mr. Grewe mentioned the difference between the Human Rights Ordinances for the Cities of Champaign and Urbana. Commissioner Lewis requested that City of Urbana codes be included in the appendix for reference. Commissioner Silvis questioned the wording of the last sentence on page 24 and assumed the document would receive a thorough editing later.

Concerning the table on page 25, Commissioner Diana noted the neighborhoods did not correspond to any map in the document.

Mr. Grewe discussed the information added on Access Grants, Transitional Housing, and CDBG entitlement.

Concerning census tract data, Commissioner Lewis suggested placing the reference page number for that particular item in parentheses. Mr. Grewe clarified this was a footnote type reference for sourcing within the body of the text.

There was discussion on whether the document should be left justified or fully justified. Commissioner Lewis preferred left justification.

Staff will include the date the Visitability Ordinance was adopted.

On page 40 Commissioner Vidoni questioned the section on language barriers under Jurisdictional Profile. Commissioner Diana said it was implied that there was a decline in discrimination that is a false decline because there was an increase in non-English speaking residents. He stated both points were valid; however, the linkage was not substantiated unless supported by data, for example, identifying local, state and national data. Discussion continued on ambiguous language and lack of substantiating data. Referencing the phrase, “a decline in reported cases,” Ms. Rasmussen felt this implied there had been reported cases of discrimination. However, she did not believe there had been a case of discrimination based on the language barrier.

On page 42 Commissioner Shisler suggested changing the first sentence of the Housing Profile. Under Housing Discrimination Complaints on page 42, Commissioner Diana requested the sentence include the specific consequences that women and children suffered. Commissioner Shisler noted there was no action recommended.

On page 44 Ms. Rasmussen commented that there are many reasons for being homeless. However, she felt the availability of Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) did not relate to HIV/AIDS. Also, she said people in this community are not necessarily made homeless by having HIV/AIDS. Mr. Grewe explained this section applied to special populations. Discussion continued on adding a section on special needs (language, visitability, HIV/AIDS). To clarify special populations, Commissioner Lewis requested a table indicating groups protected by government regulation. Mr. Grewe added the point of this section was education to address NIMBYism. Commissioner Diana felt the points on page 44 were good items; however, they were not in logical sequence. Commissioner Shisler felt the following should not be included under housing discrimination complaints: (1) difficulty acquiring first and last months rent, (2) lack of available housing, and (3) lack of income due to being elderly or sick.

Chairperson Cobb suggested developing an outline to help with the flow of ideas. Noting some of the points were actually subpoints, Commissioner Diana suggested simpler main points. Commissioner Lewis added that an outline would provide a direct path and would help identify overlapping ideas or missed points. Commissioner Diana remarked this would insure each recommendation was in its best place rather than being repeated. Ms. Rasmussen proposed using the format used for the Strategies and Objectives in the Consolidated Plan. Mr. Grewe and

Commissioner Lewis agreed. If issues in the Analysis of Impediments were footnoted with the appropriate strategies, Commissioner Diana felt it would be easier for the CD Commission to consider and evaluate the programs. Chairperson Cobb said whoever would implement the issues would better understand all related points. He noted other agencies besides the City of Urbana would be involved with implementing these points.

On page 44 Commissioner Thakkar requested the environment for learning should be re-evaluated to include a science and technology center for the schools and communities. On page 45 his point was sustained access to education and technology.

Discussion continued on resource centers within the Transitional Housing Program, mapping neighborhoods for amenities, tax credits, tax rates, and so on.

Mr. Grewe stated it was the CD Commissions' responsibility to create, rather than implement, an Analysis of Impediments. This is a report to HUD on what the City of Urbana has done to further fair housing each year, such as funding a brochure, sponsoring a workshop, etc. Referencing grant funds, Commissioner Lewis believed there was some degree of leverage with other agencies. Subgrantees who receive federal funding must adhere to policies and recommendations directly related to federal guidelines. He mentioned using opportunities to influence as many as possible.

Commissioner Diana questioned the percentage designation on maps pages 51-56. Mr. Grewe replied that staff used ArcView to create these maps. It takes data and makes choices based on the number of data points. Although Commissioner Diana noted this was valid, he preferred using standard percents throughout the maps when using comparative visual graphing.

Commissioner Diana assumed the SOC Codes on page 62 were based on those that represented this area. He requested the analysis state the reason for choosing these codes.

Commissioner Lewis asked what trends could be discerned by overlaying the maps. Mr. Grewe responded that if someone wanted to live in a certain area, the City of Urbana did not want the lack of amenities to be an impediment.

Commissioner Vidoni remarked that staff has chosen to do a comprehensive approach, which he felt was good. However, this approach left a lot of room for interpretation. The question is what should or should not be included. He was very impressed with the scope of the task and noted that staff's approach was extremely comprehensive. The Analysis of Impediments is in the building phase, where there is a lot of room for error or misinterpretation.

Mr. Grewe thanked commissioners for their feedback. He felt their input would further advance the document.

Commissioner Thakkar wondered if the tables on pages 15 and 62 could be combined. Ms. Rasmussen added it would be interesting to include the companies' job classifications.

Commissioner Thakkar commented that the City of Urbana is easy to reach when traveling. Not many small cities have access to a train station, airport, and mass transit district. He recommended including the MTD's bus schedule. Commissioner Shisler suggested moving this information forward in the appendix. Chairperson Cobb suggested starting with positive points and then moving to the negatives.

In response to Chairperson Cobb, Mr. Grewe said it has been ten years since the last Analysis of Impediments. The City of Urbana wants to move forward with this.

New Business: Priorities for CDBG Public Service Funding – Consolidated Social Service Funding Pool – Mr. Grewe reminded commissioners there is \$29,000-\$30,000 in Public Service funds in the draft Annual Action Plan. The CD Commission determines priorities for those funds based on the Consolidated Plan, and the City Council considers these priorities when making funding decisions. Ms. Rasmussen remembered that some commissioners felt there was not enough emphasis on youth programs. If the CD Commission desired, they could direct all funds to youth programs, such as summer employment, childcare, or any programs that benefit children and young people.

Chairperson Cobb asked about the current priorities. Ms. Rasmussen stated that for the last three years the priorities were the same but the order has been changed: job training, homelessness, and youth. Mr. Grewe added this was not a great sum of money.

Commissioner Silvis asked for a definition of special populations. Ms. Rasmussen replied this includes the developmentally disabled and persons with HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Commissioner Lewis asked if local mental health programs were doing well. Ms. Rasmussen replied that all agencies need more affordable permanent housing. Chairperson Cobb suggested considering programs that are relatively well funded and proceeding from there. Ms. Rasmussen encouraged commissioners to link priorities.

Chairperson Cobb stated the CD Commission was in agreement about eliminating Historic Preservation as a funding priority.

Considering the Analysis of Impediments, Commissioner Thakkar supported affordable housing. Commissioner Vidoni remarked this was the year of fair housing choice. He supported programs that address fair housing, barriers to affordable housing, and public housing. Commissioner Silvis asked what the term "fair housing" meant. Ms. Rasmussen explained that fair housing means someone entering the community has the same opportunity to find housing as anyone else. It is not the same as affordable housing or public housing. Ms. Rasmussen did not remember any past projects or agencies that requested funds for fair housing. She provided examples of affordable housing providers: Homestead Corporation, the TIMES Center, A Woman's Place, Center for Women in Transition, and the Stepping Stone Shelter. Ms. Rasmussen stated some agencies may request funding for programs that are not eligible under CDBG regulations.

Commissioner Lewis preferred not to duplicate services and suggested eliminating those agencies that have funding.

Commissioner Diana stated even if there are three or five priorities, nothing else is precluded. Ms. Rasmussen noted the antipoverty strategy is general. Funds go to the CDBG target area and lower income persons. This would return priorities to homelessness, special populations, seniors, youth, anti-crime, and job training. Commissioner Diana was troubled by the generality of the selections because it indicated no preference. He questioned if the CD Commission wanted these priorities to be more general or more specific.

Commissioner Thakkar said public facilities would relate to other issues. He stated that youth represents children and young adults. Ms. Rasmussen proposed narrowing the youth categories by age. Commissioner Diana was concerned about the decreasing number of applications concerning youth. Providing a specific example, Ms. Rasmussen said the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club after-school program would need funding. Commissioner Thakkar believed it was good to have sample scenarios for applicants. Noting in the past the CD Commission has recommended general categories like youth or seniors, Esther Patt felt the decision to fund a specific agency at this time was outside the application process. She was concerned with designating specific agencies before any applications have been received. Ms. Patt stated the City Council would ignore such a request. Commissioner Diana asked if it was acceptable to give agencies a “general shopping list” of programs that are fundable under Public Service and indicate the special areas of focus for this year. Ms. Patt felt suggestions for more specific areas would be acceptable, for example categories of interest, need or type of service.

Commissioner Silvis was concerned that agencies would look at the funding priorities and then not submit an application. She suggested the CD Commission identify broad categories as in the past. Ms. Rasmussen responded that, in general, applicants are not always aware of CD Commission recommendations, although some agencies ask about the priorities. Also, by the time the Annual Action Plan is completed, the agencies have submitted their applications. Ms. Rasmussen stated the agencies do not submit Consolidated Social Service Funding applications based on CD Commission priorities. Instead, staff uses these priorities to select projects for funding with CDBG monies. Ms. Patt noted that staff from some agencies attend CD Commission meetings or watch the meeting on UPTV.

Commissioner Thakkar felt it was helpful to have criteria to review applications.

Discussion continued on which priorities to eliminate. In response to Chairperson Cobb, Ms. Rasmussen said a neighborhood watch program that received past funding was an example of an Anti-Crime priority. Commissioner Shisler noted there are already several Lead-Based Paint programs. Commissioner Lewis suggested removing Public Housing as a priority. Commissioner Thakkar suggested removing Barriers to Affordable Housing. Commissioner Lewis felt Homelessness has received funding in the past. Commissioner Silvis questioned how the City of Urbana could fund Fair Housing. Ms. Rasmussen replied that she has not seen programs for this particular priority in the past. Chairperson Cobb asked about programs for seniors, and Mr. Grewe highlighted the City of Urbana’s Senior Repair Service. Commissioner Thakkar considered changing Youth to a more specific category such as Children and Young Adults. Commissioner Silvis wondered how this was different from youth. Commissioner Thakkar then suggested focusing on primary and elementary children.

Commissioner Lewis questioned the meaning of Economic Development. Ms. Rasmussen referenced past job training programs. *Chairperson Cobb stated it was the consensus of the CD Commission that Economic Development be changed to Job Training.*

Commissioner Shisler asked how many applications were received last year. Ms. Rasmussen replied 70.

Ms. Rasmussen explained one example of public facilities would be a neighborhood center or a technology center. She thought if the larger churches used space for job training, this could possibly fall under public facilities. Public facilities mean funding bricks and mortar or operations. When Commissioner Thakkar suggested different wording, Commissioner Diana proposed the term Community Facilities. *Chairperson Cobb stated it was the consensus of the CD Commission that Public Facilities be changed to Community Facilities.*

Commissioner Thakkar recommended placing Community Facilities above Special Populations. *Chairperson Cobb stated it was the consensus of the CD Commission that Community Facilities be placed above Special Populations.*

Commissioner Shisler moved to recommend the following priorities to City Council: Youth, Job Training, Community Facilities, Special Populations, Seniors, Anti-Crime. Commissioner Thakkar seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Rasmussen distributed a chart on the Continuum of Care.

Adjournment: Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 10:40 p.m.

Recorded by Connie Eldridge